

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 STATE 187209 TOSEC 080221
ORIGIN NODS-00

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /001 R

DRAFTED BY INR/RNA:PHSTODDARD/MGBANNERMAN
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S E C R E T STATE 187209 TOSEC 080221

NODIS
WHITE HOUSE FOR DR BRZEZINSKI ONLY

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: OVIP (VANCE, CYRUS)

SUBJECT: INTELLIGENCE APPRAISAL ON SOUTHERN LEBANON
REF: SECTO 8106; TEL AVIV 5875

SAUNDERS FROM KIRK AND STODDARD

1. RIGHTIST FORCES IN THE SOUTH HAVE SUSTAINED HEAVIER
LOSSES BECAUSE OF INCREASED SHELLING BY PALESTINIAN
ELEMENTS OVER THE PAST FEW DAYS. BOTH MAINLINE PALESTINIANS
AND REJECTIONISTS HAVE PARTICIPATED IN THIS CAMPAIGN
BUT IT IS NOT CLEAR WHETHER THE PALESTINIANS INITIATED
THE SHELLING OR WERE RESPONDING TO HEAVY ISRAELI/CHRISTIAN
BARRAGES IN REACTING TO SHELLING BY REJECTIONISTS.

2. DESPITE THE CASUALTIES AMONG THE CHRISTIAN RIGHTISTS'
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THERE HAS BEEN NO SHRINKAGE OF THE AREA UNDER THEIR CONTROL
AND NO MAJOR MOVEMENT OF PALESTINIANS INTO THE AREA
IN RECENT DAYS. WE CONCLUDE, THEREFORE, THAT THE RIGHTISTS
POSITION HAS NOT DETERIORATED SIGNIFICANTLY.

3. THE SYRIANS CONTINUE TO HOLD THE KEY TO BRINGING
SECURITY TO SOUTHERN LEBANON. THEY MUST BE ALLOWING

THE PALESTINIANS TO RESUPPLY THEIR UNITS IN THE SOUTH, AND SINCE THE SIGNING OF THE SHTAURAH AGREEMENT MAY HAVE PERMITTED ADDITIONAL MATERIEL TO MOVE INTO THE AREA. ON THE OTHER HAND, THE SYRIANS DO NOT WANT TO PROVOKE THE ISRAELIS. DAMASCUS HAS GREAT INFLUENCE IN THE SOUTH BUT CANNOT CONTROL ALL LEFTIST/PALESTINIAN FORCES FROM CURRENT SYRIAN POSITIONS NORTH OF THE LITANI.

4. WE NOTE THAT THE PALESTINIANS CLAIM THAT ISRAELI FORCES CROSSED INTO LEBANON YESTERDAY AND ENGAGED PALESTINIANS IN YARIN. WE CAN CONFIRM THE FIGHTING BUT NOT THE PRESENCE OF THE ISRAELIS.

5. A MORE DETAILED ANALYSIS OF THE INTELLIGENCE ON THIS SUBJECT WILL FOLLOW ASAP. CHRISTOPHER

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